

Docket No. 99-063-MIS

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

## Path Balancing Apparatus and Method

5

An apparatus and method for workload balancing along multiple communication paths to a plurality of devices. The apparatus includes a controller that accumulates path usage information and a path balancing device that makes use of the accumulated path usage information to perform a path balancing operation. The path balancing method involves the path balancing device calculating the total expected connect time for all I/O messages issued to each of a plurality of peripheral devices during a predefined sampling period. These totals are then added for each communication path for the sampling period to obtain path totals. The path totals are then compared to see if a difference between the highest used path and the lowest used path is greater than a threshold amount. If the difference is higher than the threshold amount, the peripheral device having a total expected connect time that is closest to a target value is moved from the highest used path to the lowest used path.

10

15

20